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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 27 February 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

It is with grave concern that I write to inform you that Mr. Roni Yihye, a 47-year-old father of four, was murdered today after a Qassam rocket, fired by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip, landed in a parking lot near Sapir College in southern Israel. No less than 22 Qassam rockets were fired during the day, striking in and around the town of Sderot. The latest barrage included 11 rockets, which were launched successively in a span of less than five minutes. The Hamas terrorist organization claimed responsibility.

Today's Qassam rocket fire came just days after Palestinian terrorists injured 10-year-old Yossi Haimov, this past Monday, on 25 February, in Sderot. Yossi and his 8-year-old sister, Maria, were playing outside a friend's house when a Qassam rocket slammed into the backyard.

The fact that my delegation is forced to write and inform you of these Palestinian terrorist attacks with alarming regularity should not be mistaken for routine procedure. There is nothing mundane about Palestinian terrorism; it is a deadly force with devastating real-world consequences. Palestinian terrorism can never be justified or explained, especially amidst calls for equivalence and parity, as we recently heard. The security threats that Israel faces arise from a situation where armed terrorists like Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist organizations intentionally target Israeli civilians. Hence, the State of Israel is obligated and will continue to defend its citizens, in accordance with its inherent right, like any other nation, under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Hamas's firing of rockets at Israeli civilians from within populated Palestinian areas is a war crime that harms both Israelis and Palestinians. While Israel takes the necessary measures to protect all civilian populations and ensure their humanitarian needs, Hamas takes the necessary measures to cause the utmost death and destruction. Moreover, Palestinian

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terrorists, like Hamas, are backed with the full support of some States, in violation of international law.

The unremitting and indiscriminate Qassam rocket fire has levied an insufferable toll on the civilian population of southern Israel, triggering a severe humanitarian situation there. The safety, security and stability of all citizens in our region will remain in peril so long as Palestinian terrorism continues unabated. Hence, the Palestinian leadership must stop the violence, dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, end the cycle of impunity and bring the terrorists to justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.